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S E R M O N

Preached in the

Parish-Church of *Lisburn*,

On the 21st of *June*, 1749;

When the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of
Down and Connor held his Episcopal Visita-
tion of his Dioceses.

By *JOHN GRACE*, Presbyter of the
Diocese of *Connor*.

Published by Order of the Bishop and Clergy
then present.

D U B L I N :

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THE Author of this Discourse, in Justice to the Right Reverend and Reverend Clergy who ordered the Publication of it, thinks himself obliged to declare, that after he had preached before them, he was sensible (such are their modest Sentiments of themselves) that an Apology was necessary for his Address to them in the Close of his Sermon; which, he was of Opinion, he could not present as he ought, without due Encomium. The Preacher observ'd that many Dissenters were of the Audience, and apprehended it might be of Service to the Church, and the spiritual Interest of the Dissenters themselves, that they should think worthily, that is, very honourably of the Bishop and the rest of the established Clergy who reside among them.

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S E R M O N.

Epistle of St. Paul to Titus, ii. 15.

These Things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all Authority. Let no Man despise thee.

ALTHO' Saint Paul directeth this Epistle to a Bishop of the Christian Church, plainly distinguished by the Essentials of Episcopal Jurisdiction, yet the Charge given in the Words, which are the Subject of this Discourse, doth not seem to relate wholly to him, and his Successors in that Supreme and most Honourable Quality of the Ministers of Christ, the Bishops of his Church.

Without Doubt, by *rebuking with Authority*, is here primarily meant the inflicting Ecclesiastical Censures on obstinate Offenders, proper to the highest Order, that of Bishops only: But it must be granted, that the Subordinate Pastors of the several Congregations committed to their Care, have in their Degree also, a Right to re-

buke others. The very Nature of their Office proveth it necessary ; and that Necessity proveth it lawful.

And as for *speaking, and exhorting, and letting no Man despise them*, these are of great, tho' they are not pretended to be of equal, Importance to the whole Body of the Clergy : For the Things which they are to speak and exhort to, are what St. Paul summarily mentioneth, in the 12th Verse of this Chapter, *to live Soberly, Righteously and Godly, ~~as is~~* reverently, towards the Divine Majesty. And it is of great Consequence, that their Discourses on these weighty Subjects should be carefully attended to, and that they who slight them should be rebuked. And that they might *teach, exhort, and rebuke* with Power and Efficacy, they should *let no Man despise them*, for Neglect of their Duty, or doing any Thing that is base or contemptible : Or, as others expound the Words, altho' this Epistle was particularly inscribed to *Titus*, yet being to be read in the Assemblies of all Christians, they were thence to learn their Duty, not to despise their Bishops, consequently, nor any other good Minister of *Christ*. For, that Instructions, Exhortations or Rebukes from him who is despised, will avail little on him who despiseth him, is a Truth so evident, that it needeth not to be proved.

The Apostle therefore, for the proper and successful Discharge of his Ministry, proposeth these



these Directions by the Authority of *Christ*, the great Bishop of our Souls.

First, that we discourse to those to whom we are appointed to minister in Holy Things, on the substantial Duties of our Religion; that we instruct them in these, and exhort to the Practice of them.

Secondly, that we rebuke those who reject our Instructions, and on whom our Exhortations do not prevail.

Thirdly, to render our Instructions, Exhortations, and Rebukes effectual, that we do what is in our Power to preserve ourselves from being despised; and that they, to whom we are sent with Authority from *Christ*, do not unworthily despise us.

In this last Proposition, I include both the Senses, in which Expositors severally understand the Apostle's Words, *Let no Man despise thee*: For which ever be prefer'd as a strict Paraphrase on the Text, both are proper for a mixed Congregation of Clergy and Laity; and there will be no Force on the Text, if each understand this Part of it as it may be respectively apply'd to themselves.

As to instructing in the substantial Duties of Religion, this is imply'd in the Terms of *Pastors* and

and Teachers, with whose Offices and their Characters the Holy Ghost hath invested and dignified us. We ought therefore, as Pastors, to *feed the Flock of Christ*; as Teachers, to remove their Ignorance of what the Scripture declareth *necessary to Salvation*. *I will, saith St. Paul, in his Epistle to Titus, Ch. iii. Ver. 8. That thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works. These Things are good and profitable unto Men. These Things, a sound Faith, and a suitable Practice, are what Men ought chiefly to be instructed in, and exhorted to; for this is to seek their Profit, that they might be saved.* These Things are safely, and may be profitably discoursed of; which can seldom be affirmed of nice and merely speculative Points of Divinity, or the sublime Mysteries of our Faith; for few appear qualified to speak of them, and fewer to hear them.

To gain Attention, (without which we cannot expect to convey Instruction,) it is fit that our Discourses on Religion should be, tho' in a plain, yet not in a low, sordid Style; for this is unbecoming the Dignity of the Subject, and denoteth Want of proper Skill and Elegance in the Speaker, or a careless Indifference towards the Things he speaketh of; either of which will cause him to be generally disregarded. The *Scribe who is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, who is skilful in expounding the*
Rules

Rules of the Gospel (called a *Scribe* under the
 State of the Gospel, in Allusion to the Jewish
Scribe, and his Office in the Explication of the
Mosaick Law) should, like an Householder of
 plentiful Fortune, and prudent Economy, *bring*
out of his Treasure Things new and old. From the
 Plenty of useful Knowledge, which he hath
 acquired, and preserved in the Repository of
 his Mind, for the most Noble Purposes, the In-
 terests of Religion, and the Salvation of Souls;
 as such an Householder lays up in his Store-House
 the old and new Fruits of the Earth, to be
 brought out as Occasion requires, for the Suste-
 nance and Pleasure of his Family, or his Guests;
 so the Gospel-Scribe, furnished with competent
 Learning, and adorned with a Facility of ex-
 pressing it well, (both the Blessings of God on a
 devout and faithful Industry) must suit his In-
 structions to the Wants and Capacities, and his
 Language to the Relish of his Hearers, with
 Intention to make them wiser and better; Pur-
 poses not to be effected by speaking *great swell-*
ing Words of Vanity; which as they are seldom,
 if ever, conducted by good Sense, may remind
 us of an unskilful Pilot, pretending to steer a
 Vessel without Ballast, yet carrying great Sail;
 but by the Preacher of Righteousness preparing
 himself to be, as the Prophet expresseth, *as a*
very lovely Song of one who hath a pleasant Voice,
and can play well on an Instrument; for we know
 that what so pleaseth the Ear, often captivateth
 the Heart. Give me leave therefore, Reverend
 Brethren,

Brethren, in the Words of St. Paul to Timothy, to put you in Remembrance, that ye stir up this Gift of God which is in you, that your profiting may appear unto all.

To proceed; We are commanded not only to teach the necessary and substantial Duties of Religion, but to exhort our Hearers to the Practice of them. For as, however instructive a Discourse may be, however fairly and fully Rules of Practice arise from Doctrines laid down, they may be unobserv'd, unless they be pointed out to them; so they may be neglected (which in many Instances the Observation of the Apostle's Rule may prevent) if they be not exhorted to them; we therefore, to whom the Word of Reconciliation is committed, are not only to instruct Men in their Duty towards God, but seriously and affectionately, and in the most pathetic Manner (as we may learn from the Prophets, Apostles, and Christ himself) to exhort them to practise those Things which make for their Peace. If our Instructions are rejected, and our Exhortations cannot prevail, we are then, as the Apostle directeth,

Secondly, *To rebuke them.* But here a prudential Caution is to be observed, not to rebuke any Man personally, except in Private, unless when after he hath been more than once prudently and earnestly admonished, he continueth obstinate; or when he sinneth notoriously and scan-

scandalously ; for then he is to be *rebuked before all Men, that others may fear*, may fear the heavy Judgments of God consequent on the Anathemas of his Church. How greatly these Censures were dreaded, and with how much Reason from the Times of the Apostles, till the Emperors became *Christians* ; when the Spiritual was abated by the temporal Power, and the Rod of the Apostles was succeeded by the Sword of the Civil Magistrate, is evident from the best Records of Antiquity: They tell us, that Excommunication being denounced by the Apostles, or their Successors, the Bishops of the Church, either personally, or by others deputed by them (for they, after the Example of *St. Paul*, tho' *absent in Body*, sometimes judged by these, as if they were present) the Wretches who had this Sentence passed on them were immediately forsaken by God, and his guardian ministring Spirits ; and being destitute of his Protection, they were seized by that Adversary of Mankind, the Devil, who afflicted them with Ulcers, or such Diseases of the Body as made them Spectacles dreadful to all who were Eye-witnesses of their Sufferings ; that they might fear, lest they should fall into the same Condemnation. Thus the incestuous *Corinthian* was adjudged by *St. Paul* to be deliver'd up to *Satan for the Destruction of the Flesh* ; not the total Destruction of the Flesh, the Death of the Body, but (as some Interpreters express) for the extreme Maceration of it, that the Spirit of the

guilty Person might, by the Grace of God, and his sincere Repentance *be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus*, when He shall appear in the last Judgment *to render to every Man according to his Works*; and lest the Sinner, if not thus made an Example for the Terror of others, might corrupt them. For thus the Apostle proceedeth, *Know ye not that a little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump? Purge out therefore the old Leaven*: He explaineth the Metaphor thus, *therefore put away from yourselves*, that is, excommunicate, *that wicked Person*; do this by my Authority derived from Christ, whose Apostle I am, his Substitute to govern the Affairs of his Church, under him a Ruler or Bishop of it to admit into, and to drive out from, the Communion of the Church; and as *Christ* sent me, having a Commission to send others, and they the like, while the Church shall continue on Earth. Thus the judicial Sentence of the Apostle was understood, and there was an universal Practice answerable to it in the primitive *Christian* Church. The Act of Excommunication was without Controversy own'd to be Part of the Power of the Keys, called so by Analogy or Resemblance; for as the Office of Keys is to admit into, or to exclude from a Place; so being apply'd to a spiritual Sense, the Power of the Keys granted by *Christ*, as Lord of his own House, and appointing Bishops the Stewards of it, they have a Right to receive Infants, who promise well by their Sureties, or adult Persons
who

who engage for themselves, into the Congregation of *Christ's* Flock by Baptism. But if after this, they fall away from *Christ* by Actions which may reflect Dishonour on the Community of *Christians*, or may be contagious among them, Bishops may and ought to drive such Men out from their Society, and so keep them, till their Repentance and visible Amendment entitle them to be restored to the Communion. *Christ* promised to St. *Peter*, (not in Pre-eminence above the rest of the Apostles) and soon after to them all, (the Difference is only in the Order of Time) which is plain from *Matt.* xvi. 19. *Matt.* xviii. 18; that *whatsoever they shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever they shall loose on Earth shall be loosed in Heaven*: For tho' in this latter Text the Keys are not mentioned, they are evidently to be understood, as they are in that of St. *John* xx. 23: *Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye retain they are retained.* Words of the same Import with those in the Gospel written by St. *Matthew*, and again repeated by our Blessed Saviour soon after his Resurrection; whence we conclude, that the Authority of the Keys was not granted to St. *Peter*, exclusively of the rest of the Apostles, but extended to them all, and by necessary Consequence, to all succeeding Governors or Bishops of the *Christian Church*.

But, as few of the Clergy comparatively are thus dignified, and the greater Number have the Cure of Souls immediately committed to them, they must have Authority to rebuke Men of corrupt Minds: Some of these may not be so wicked as to deserve the extreme Censures of the Church, yet without Rebukes they may not be reformed; and if it be the Duty of every Man seasonably to rebuke his Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him, most of all is it our Duty, who are peculiarly appointed to watch for Men's Souls, as they *who must give Account at the last Day.*

For the successful Performance of this Part of our Office St. James, c. i. v. 20. gives us this cautionary Maxim, *The Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God.* However perverse, I may add, however insolent and abusive some may be when they are rebuked, tho' it be done with Tenderness and hearty Concern for their Welfare, (I suppose there are few of us who have not met with these unworthy Returns for our good Will) it is not for the Advantage of Religion, or of our Characters, to fly out into the Transports of Anger against them. Do thou therefore, *O Man of God, flee these Things, and follow after Patience and Meekness,* as St. Paul adviseth; or, in the Words of Solomon, *Answer not a Fool according to his Folly, lest thou also be like unto him.* We know that
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the Character he gives of a Fool is, that his *Wrath is presently known.*

There are some Men, who, because they do not wish well to our Order, rejoyce at an Opportunity of provoking any of us into the Passion of Anger: And these Scorners hating Rebuke, if by their unmannerly *Crepitus Ingenii*, their sly Drollery (perhaps on some natural Infirmities of their Reprover) their recriminating him (it may be very undeservedly) or their expressing high Indignation against the Minister of *Christ*, for taking (as they suppose) too much upon him; if by any of these Means they can provoke him to Rage, they think they expose him to great Disadvantage; and in Truth, they do not think amiss.

In the Account of the Life of an illustrious Prelate of our Church, and in the highest Station of it, the Historian, who giveth him a most exalted Character for his Piety, Charity and Learning, joined to the Blessing of a great Genius, telleth us, that he had his Weakness too, that he was soon provoked to violent Anger, which some who wished him that untimely Fate, to which he was adjudged by cruel Men, made Advantage of against him; they represented him publickly in that dark Side of his Character, which made him less beloved than he deserved to be, and would have been, had he been free from that Failing, or had he

he laboured to correct it. The Historian observeth, that tho' he had not Malice against any Man, he seldom could reprove with Temper, especially when he reprov'd for Sin; which, tho' it proceeded from an intense Zeal for Religion, did not advance the Interest of it, but made the Guilty more obstinate than he found them. The Application is obvious; and the more eminent the Example is, the Argument intended to be confirm'd by it is the stronger.

What hath been spoken of teaching, exhorting and rebuking, hath been with regard to our outward Expressions: But there is a more effectual Method of benefiting, not only those who are immediately committed to our Charge, but it is more extensive and lasting; for it may do good to our Country, to our Age, to Posterity long after we have shut our Eyes, and turned our Backs on this World; and, no doubt, our *Reward will follow us*. What I here speak of, is good Example; this comprehendeth the several Particulars discours'd of.

It teacheth. We observe in the Affairs of this World, in the Conduct of which Men are generally careful and anxious, how ready they are to be directed by such as they think able to guide them, if their Advice be enforced by their own Example. In such *Counsellors* they apprehend *there is Safety*; for they are recommended by their Skill and Integrity: And who can be

be supposed so well well qualified to understand Religion, and the Sanctions of it, the Certainty of everlasting Joys, and never-ceasing Torments, as they whose Profession obligeth them to *search the Scriptures*? Who can doubt of their Sincerity in preaching these Things, who observeth that they live under *the Powers of the World to come*?

This exhorteth *Christians* to their Duty. The first Principle of Nature, Self-preservation, adviseth; or, shall I rather say? obligeth them, to endeavour to be for ever happy, and to avoid being eternally miserable. When therefore Life and Death are set before them, and they who are *wise and understand these Things*, prove by sensible Experience, a more powerful Argument than bare Discourse, that they prepare for their latter End; and, (as when St. Paul commanded *Timothy to teach*, as he was directed to persuade to what he taught,) are Examples to the Believers; that, (as the Apostle otherwise also expresseth it,) *They take heed to themselves, they shall both save themselves, and those who hear them.*

Good Example rebuketh; for it operateth by that natural Sense of Shame, with which God hath blessed Mankind to preserve good Reputation, useful in this World, and, as it is the Reward of virtuous Actions, an Earnest of Glory hereafter. This native Principle discovereth itself in early Youth, and is wanting only in such as the Scripture termeth *Sons of Belial*,
that

that is, Persons without Yoke, without any Re-
 straint on their Actions. Where any Ingenuity
 is left, for a Man to observe another of the like
 Passions with himself, equally subject to Infirmi-
 ties, and expos'd to the like Temptations, to be
 honourably distinguished in the World by a sig-
 nal exemplary Virtue, must, unless the Sinner be
 void of Shame, *his Face*, as the Prophet *Jeremiah*
 saith of the Incurable, *harder than a Rock*, re-
 prove him while he continueth in an evil Course,
 his Conscience tormenting him 'till these
 Reflections produce in him the peaceable
 Fruit of Righteousness: And with regard to
 his Credit in this World, and his lasting Inte-
 rest in the next, force him to endeavour to be
 great and good as another Man. Such is the
 natural Effect of good Example by whomso-
 ever exhibited, but most of all by us who are
 peculiarly appointed to be the *Lights of the*
World, and are as a *City set on a Hill which can*
not be hid; for the very Nature of our Function
 exposeth our Behaviour, whether we design it
 or not: So that considering the Influence of our
 Example, and the conspicuous Station in which
 we are placed, we may invert the Saying of the
 Prophet *Isaiah*, and what he speaketh in a dif-
 ferent Sense, we may apply to this we are now
 discoursing of, *As with the Priest, so with the*
People.

I proceed to the third and last Direction of
 the Apostle, that to render our Instructions, Ex-
 hortations

hortitions and Rebukes effectual; we do what is in our Power to preserve our selves from being despised; and that the Lalty do not unworthily despise us.

There are two Things chiefly which would so debase the Ministers of the Gospel, from whom particularly their Opposites are required, as to bring them under deserved Contempt. These are Ignorance and Immorality. For if the *Blind* take upon them to *lead the Blind*, or if they who are going in the Way of Destruction exhort others to pursue that which leadeth to Life; they are of all Men the most contemptible; they of the one sort, because they appear not to understand that whereof they affirm; of the other, because they contradict by their Practice what they affirm and recommend by their Discourse. A few Words distinctly of each of these just Causes of Contempt. First of Ignorance.

Whatever Business a Man professeth, if it be found that he doth not understand it, he is not only considered as a poor worthless Pretender, but justly censured for raising Expectations which he cannot answer. And if any should in his Behalf offer that pitiful Apology for his mean Performances, that he does as well as he can, or think to excuse him by saying, Nature hath not fitted him for the Calling he hath engaged in; the Answer is ready; therefore it was ab-

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furd and contradictory to undertake it. Bold
 and giddy Enterprizing what a Man hath just
 Cause to think he will never be able to per-
 form with Advantage to others, or Credit to
 himself, is blameable whatever he undertak-
 eth; but if the Ministry of Religion, it is abo-
 minable. How can the ignorant teach? How
 can they argue for the Truth? How can they,
 before their Admission into the Office of Dea-
 cons, say that they trust they are inwardly mov-
 ed by the Holy Ghost to take on them this
 Office and Ministration, for the promotion of his
 Glory, and the edifying his People? Will it be
 said, that at the Age required by the Canon of
 our Church they were not Judges of their own
 Abilities, or that they could not then distin-
 guish whither from a spiritual or a temporal
 Principle, whether to serve God and his Church,
 or to serve themselves by the Profits and Emo-
 luments of it, they offered themselves to the
 Ministry? This deserveth no Answer, but pro-
 voketh the Exclamation which our Saviour used
 to the *Pharisees, ye Fools and Blind!* If it be ar-
 gued that they may have Piety, it is answered,
 that in this Instance, there can be no true Piety
 without Prudence. God be praised, our Church
 doth not approve of inward Calls without sub-
 stantial Qualifications. It never condemned hu-
 man Learning as an Hindrance to Piety, or
 exploded it as prophane and heathenous, not to
 be admitted into Christian Assemblies, altho' the
Athenians used it in the *Areopagus*, and the *Ro-*
mans

mans in the *Forum*. We, (to speak once in the Language of those who are fond of compound Phrases, would, (well as they) have a Soul-saving, and Gospel-preaching Ministry, and we would have it with Simplicity; but we think it impossible to enjoy it in that Sense of the Word Simplicity, which denoteth Ignorance, that Blemish of the Mind, which is never so contemptible, as when it dareth to approach the Sanctuary of the Lord.

It is reasonably hoped that the greater Number of our Clergy have therefore taken Care to prepare themselves for their solemn Designation to the Ministry; and, as more was daily to be expected from them, have made a Proficiency in theological Knowledge proportionable to the Time and Opportunities they have had for it. What! tho' some of these who have exhausted their Health and Strength in hard Study, who have toiled in it Nights and Days, and Years together, however expert *Fishers of Men* they may be, have caught nothing from those who dispose of Fortunes and Preferments; while diligent Seekers, but otherwise vagrant Idlers, have got that which (if the common Saying be true, makes the Man) but it is much truer, what they have not deserved. Fortune maketh no Exception to this Truth, Ignorance in the Ministers of the Gospel, wherever it is found, occasioneth them to be despised.

What is mentioned to have the like Effect, is Immorality. The Crime and Scandal of this are greater than of the other. There is no Man of so low Understanding but is able to discern it; nor any Man, however vicious himself, but must despise a Clergy-man for it. Suppose such an one preaching against Vice (as in the Course of his Office he must do it) the Answer which every Man who knoweth him maketh him in his Thoughts (however some may spare him in their Expressions) is, *Physician, heal thyself*. Indeed he is a bad Physician of the Soul, who doth not. But, as a *good Name*, which Solomon saith, *is better than precious Ointment*, when once tainted, is, like that, hard to be recovered; so, when such a Man's own Heart condemneth him, and he reflecteth on the Influence of his bad Example, he is in a miserable Condition; for he can neither omit his Duty, nor discharge it with a Saving to his Character, and a quiet Conscience. In regard to the Audience, no one of which is, I believe, personally concerned in what is now said, (if otherwise, *Behold here they are, let who will witness against them*) I insist no longer on it.

I shall briefly mention some other Things, which cause the Clergy to be despised.

A Neglect of their Duty to reprove great Offenders, grievous in their Crimes, and great
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in Wealth, Station or Family. This is imputed to Cowardice or Avarice, despicable Qualities.

From the latter of these proceedeth another Ground of Contempt, Want of Hospitality, so far as it may be with Frugality, and the Duty a Man oweth to those of his Household. The Clergy, it is owned, are seldom despised for Defect in this, but often blamed for a faulty Excess. Thus it is, and that thus it hath been, the Widows and Children of several Clergymen successively possessed of the few plentiful Livings left among us, being Objects of Charity, are melancholy Proofs.

Intimate Companions indiscreetly chosen, cause the Clergy to be despised. For by these it is judged, and with Reason, a Man's own Manners generally to be formed.

Buffoonry, and too great a Latitude of Jest- ing, have the same Effect; for these betray a Levity of Mind, unsuitable to the Clergy, who should be grave.

To conclude Instances of this Nature and Tendency, with what belongeth to a Man's Outside, but affecteth his Reputation, squalid Dress, which made *Socrates* himself sometimes to be despised. For tho' no prudent Clergyman would merit the Description which the witty Poet

Poet *Martial* giveth of his *Bellus Homo*, which we translate a *Beau*, neither would any Man of Sense be proud of a slovenly Attire ; so far from gaining Honour, that what *Livy* recordeth as a proverbial Expression among the *Latins*, *Sordere et Contemni*, is equally true with us, except where necessary Poverty, which moveth Pity, is the Occasion of it ; otherwise, it is interpreted a Disrespect to those a Man converseth with ; and is generally returned in Kind.

As the several Particulars mentioned, some in a greater, some in a lesser Degree, all in some Measure provoke Contempt, the Apostle's Direction to let no Man despise us, so far as we are able to preserve our selves from being despised, should make us avoid these, and whatever else we may apprehend to be just Occasions of it.

Let us now consider what the Apostles saith, as it concerneth the Laity ; they are not to despise us. But because in an Age wherein Iniquity aboundeth, and a false Judgment hath misguided Men's Affections, so as to think that we deserve to be despised by them, on Account of our Function ; as if, because all ecclesiastical Persons are called, and are pleased to be called, Ministers, we were therefore their Ministers, from the literal Sense of the *Latin* Word *Minister*, and their Application of it, their Servants, we must inform them that we are not their Ministers ; but we are the Ministers of God for them.

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Now if we be the Ministers of God for the People, are we therefore so much inferior to them as to be the deserved Objects of their Contempt? An Apostle of *Christ* argueth after a very different Manner. He inferreth, that *Melchisedec*, King of Salem, that is, *Jerusalem*, and Priest of the most High God (as originally the Kingdom and Priesthood were united in the same Person) was greater than *Abraham* himself, because he blessed *Abraham*. Without Doubt, saith he, *the Less is blessed of the Better*. If any one question, whether by the Term *Better*, be meant Greater, let him read the seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. For Confirmation of our Argument, rather the Apostle's Argument, we observe that, altho' *Melchisedec* was certainly a human Person, not, as some have thought, an Angel sent from Heaven; or, as others, a Divine Virtue; or, as others, the *Messiah* in the Flesh: And altho' *Abraham* was a Kind of High-Priest, as Head of a numerous Family, yet in the Action of Blessing, *Melchisedec* was greater than *Abraham*.

As the Priesthood of *Melchisedec* typify'd that of *Christ*, we may thence infer the Dignity of the *Christian* Priesthood. For, altho' far it be from us to say, that we are like our Master *Christ*, in as much as *He is a Priest for ever, seeing He ever liveth to make Intercession*, whereas there are among us many Priests, by reason of Death, a constant Succession of Priests, who are subject to Mortality;

Mortality; yet, in our Degree, by interceding between God and Man, and in blessing his People, we resemble our Great High Priest. Hence *St. Paul* admonisheth our *Fellow-Christians* to *esteem us very highly in Love for our Work's sake.* And what can be a greater Motive of Honour and Endearment of us to them?

As for those who cast the Word of God behind them, an invincible Prejudice misrepresents us, and barreth up all the Avenues of their Hearts against us. They hate us for our Work's sake, because they *hate to be reformed*, and while they continue thus we cannot prophesy Good concerning them but Evil.

Of this Sort are they who form Cabals to derogate Religion, and to vilify Priesthood. Such are the Witlings of our present Age. Such are they, who having girded on their Weapons of War; the Shreds of some modern Comedies formed to vitiate our Youth, and refuse Gleanings from scurrilous Libels, flourish at Religion, as if they defied the ablest Champions of it, and throw what they conceit to be ingenious smart Jest at the Doctor or the Parson, Appellatives of Scorn with those who would make us as the *Fifth* of the World.

The Remedies which have been try'd to cure this great and publick Evil proving ineffectual to reform Men who are resolved Infidels and
desperately

desperately wicked, what remains for us is to assert the Truth of *Christianity*, and the Honour due to the *Christian Ministry*, by proceeding to demonstrate both in the Purity of our Lives. Such was holy *David's* Resolution expressed in the 39th Psalm. *I will take Heed to my Ways while the Wicked are before me.* And then he expresseth his Confidence in God. *Lord, what wait I for? my Hope is in thee. Deliver me from all my Transgressions. Make me not the Reproach of the Foolish.*

When an evil Heart of Unbelief is not the real Cause of the Contempt of the Clergy, I know not what Pretence, as to the Generality of them, can be made for it, but their Poverty; which, as the Satyrist hath long since observed, maketh Men ridiculous. There is no just Cause why it should do so; but that is Matter of moral Consideration. What we now speak of is Fact, not the Reason of the Thing, but the Apprehensions of Men concerning it. We grant that Poverty is contemptible if occasioned by Idleness, Extravagance or Lewdness. But what is this to the great Number of our Clergy whose Poverty is derived to them, First, From the Rapine of Popes, and their Condition made worse by those who said that the Clergy, without Distinction, without Regard to particular Merit, or Services done to the Church, had too much; but thought that they themselves could never have enough? The Popes, as they had done in

Italy, and other Countries which were subject to them, plundered the secular Clergy in these Kindoms of Tythes; which, as they were the Gift of God to them, Man could not justly take from them. They transferred these Tythes to the Regulars, who were always ready to vindicate their Claim to that universal Supremacy which they had usurped over the Church, beyond the exterior Discipline of it, even in asserting the Maintenance of the Clergy to be at their absolute Disposal. It was found to be a fruitless Thing to argue with these Advocates for the Papacy from Scripture or the ancient Memoirs of the Church; that *St. Peter* had not the Power, which the Popes assume as his Successors in the See of *Rome*; that he was not, could not be, in a strict and proper Sense, Bishop of *Rome*; therefore the Popes, not his Successors; that *St. Peter* was an *Apostle of the Circumcision* (as *St. Paul* termeth him) an œcumenical Bishop, who had the Charge of converting the *Jews* dispersed over the World, and confirming them in the *Christian* Faith; therefore his Office requiring much Travel, he could not be affixed to one Place; that he resided (as *Eusebius* tells us) near seven Years at *Antioch*, which a great Number of the *Jews* inhabited; but as they do not agree with him that he was Bishop there, in their Sense of the Word *Bishop*, so neither do we dispute it with them; that to alledge that the Bishops of *Rome* have enjoyed and exercised an universal sovereign Power from *St. Peter's* Time till the

the Opposition made by *Luther*, is a daring Confrontment to all the authentic Histories of the Church, to which we appeal to determine the Fact: as some of our learned Divines in the Time of *Luther* himself did.

To as little Purpose was it to dispute the Exercise of the Popes their pretended Authority to deprive the Secular Clergy of their Tythes, and to give them to the Regulars. These argued that they were Ecclesiasticks, therefore the Tythes were not misapplied. In answer to this, the Losers, such of them as had the Courage to speak in their own Behalf, referred to the Reason why God gave the Tythes to the *Levites*, declared by himself, *Numbers xviii. 21. Behold I have given the Children of Levi all the Tenth in Israel for an Inheritance for their Service, which they serve, even the Service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.* And they were not, as the ordinary *Levites* were, appointed to mean and servile Offices in the Tabernacle and Temple; but they were Priests, as the more honourable of the *Levites*, the Posterity of *Aaron* were, who had a very plentiful Portion appointed for them by the *Levitical* Law; the Morality of which, as in other Respects, so in a decent Provision for the officiating Clergy, subsisted under the Gospel.

In Answer to this Argument, the School-men, who were Monks, arrogantly and impiously said that the Pope was the Representative of *Christ*;

and that therefore he had lawful Power to dispose of the Goods of the Church to whom he pleased. They distinguished between Property and Possession. The Property, they pretended, was in what they termed the Apostolical See; which had granted the Possession to the Regulars for the comfortable Support of them, and of those of the Secular Clergy, whose Tythes were resumed by the same Authority, by which they had enjoy'd them. These were told that they should live plentifully on the common Stock, not worse than they did before with their respective Bishops, to whom the Tythes of the several parishes had been formerly paid, and by them distributed to their Clergy. They did so. Their Stipends, large enough for Men who had no Families (as most of them had not) were duly paid. And whenever they thought fit they were chearfully entertained at the Tables of the Monks, who kept open Hospitality, not excluding the Families of such of the Secular Clergy, who did not observe the Rule of Cælibacy; for these were considered as Strangers, of whom none was to be excepted. They were by their Foundations obliged to receive all. Yet this did not excuse the Popes robbing the Secular Clergy of the Tythes, nor the Regulars receiving them. They who served in the publick Worship of God, and the Cure of Soules had, by the Gift of God, the Property in, and should have been suffered to have kept Possession of them. To have had the Disposal of what was their own, would have been

been more acceptable to them than to have had the Monks, as it were their Receivers and Stewards without their Consent. While they quietly enjoyed their own Inheritance, they made good Use of it in Charity discreetly chosen and carefully managed, the Relief of those who by Age, Sicknefs or bodily Infirmities were disabled from Labour; in employing those who could work [in building Churches, and Nurseries for Learning, and liberally endowing them, beyond what the Monks did; of whose Bounty there are Monuments too; but not in Proportion to their much greater Wealth; which (if the common Report of it be true) was by the misguided Devotion of the People far more considerable than what they got by the Ravages of the Popes from the *Parochial* Clergy. So many of these were deprived of the Profits of their Livings, that the Wealth accruing to the Monks by them, must have been great. But we speak of it now only in Comparison.

However, without computing the Tythes, the Monks were vastly opulent. This, tho' artfully denied, and concealed by some of them before the Dissolution of the Monasteries, hath been Universally owned since, even by those of the Popish Communion. The Controversy between us and them, is, Whether they were honestly so? If Purgatory and Masses for the Dead, if the Protection and Intercession of Saints departed, if their Relicks, whether pretended or real, if Pre-
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sents to their Shrines, if these and several other Things objected against the Monks as their Inventions to get Riches, have a Foundation in Scripture and Reason, the Profit which they made of these Things was justly their own, but if these were their crafty Contrivances to defraud the People of their Substance, tho' the Monks wore Sheep's Cloathing, and some of them Hair Shirts, they were no better than ravening Wolves.

How far it might extenuate their Crimes, that they did some Good with Part of their ill-gotten Wealth, is known only to the great Judge of all the World. We can say, and too many sensibly feel, that as to a Recompence, for the Injury done to the deserving Clergy, tho' not equal to it, this ceased with themselves; contrary to what good Men wished, and the Clergy justly expected at the Beginning of the Reformation of the Church of *England*. If it be asked how the Clergy came to be more impoverished than they were before, we answer plainly thus. Designing Men informed King *Henry the Eighth* that the Secular Clergy, who seemed to subsist on the Bounty of the Monks, did not want it when they pretended that they could not live without it. It was not objected against them, as against the Monks, that *the Iniquity of Sodom, and Abundance of Idleness was in them*; but that they had by the common Policy of Priests to get Money heaped up so much of it, that

that they could live in Plenty without the Re-stitution of Tythes to them ; and there was no Reason to doubt but that Priests would be al-ways the same ; as the present, such their Suc-cessors, whatever Methods might be taken to pre-vent their imposing on the Confidence and Credi-bility of the People ; therefore the Tythes which were appropriated to what were called Religious Houses should, with the rest of their Treasures, be brought to be converted to the Use of the Crown. It was thought convenient that these Men should be, or should appear to be, credited not only of the Clergy who were contemporary with them, of whom they were false Accusers, but also of those who were yet unborn, who have since ma-nifested them to be false Prophets. These were the Commissioners appointed by the King for visiting all the Monasteries in *England*. They had many Articles of Enquiry, by which they were directed to proceed in their Visitation ; but what was very material for the Visitors was, What was the Revenue of the several Monaste-ries. For when, by Reason of great Corrup-tions, which they affirmed, that they discovered among the Monks, their Houses, Churches, Lands and Goods were declared to be forfeited to the King, he was so delighted with this Ac-cession of Wealth, of which the Writers of those Times give surprizing Accounts, as to be easily persuaded to make the Visitors and their Friends who had recommended them to such important Service sharers not only in the

Lands

Lands of the Monasteries set to them in Fee-Farms, with small Rents reserved to the Crown, but also the Tythes of a considerable Part of that Kingdom. In like Manner Abby-Lands and Tythes in this Kingdom were soon after disposed of.

Some who do not object against the Seizure of the Abby-Lands, but only disapprove the Uses to which they were apply'd, have censured this Disposition of the Tythes as the Scandal of the Reformation; but very improperly; for in Truth it is no Part of it. The Reformation of a Church, considered as a Society, is the reducing the Members of it to a Conformity to the Will of God declared in the Holy Scripture, from which they had erred. Now the Scripture saith, *Levit. xxvii. 30. All the Tythe of the Land is the Lord's: It is Holy unto the Lord.* If therefore it be a Maxim of the Law of Reason (and sure I am that is the Law of Religion) *Dominium transferre non potest qui ipse Dominus non est*, how could any but God himself dispose of his Right to another? He did so to the *Levites*, not as Proprietors, but only as Usufructuaries. God still retain'd the Right in himself, and by his Prophet *Ezekiel, xlviii. 14. He forbade his People to alienate the First-Fruits of the Land* (these were the Tythes which were to be offered up to God, and with a Form of Oblation prescribed by himself, as you may read in the 26th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*) *for they are holy unto the Lord.* The Prophet

Prophet *Malachi*, iii. 8. calls the Sin here forbidden *the Robbing of God*. What good Man ever said it was the Reformation of his Church? God Almighty, who can execute his Will by whatever Means he pleaseth, made a Prince, who was no Saint, the Instrument of introducing a Reformation of Part of the Catholick Church from many gross Errors and Abuses. It is plain that in what he did to the labouring Clergy, the Grace of God was not with him. His Severity to them proceeded from an insatiable Desire of Riches; which a boundless Profusion of them to his Favourites disabled him to make any good Use of, in Comparison with the Injury done to those, who, with the Consent of his Parliament, which he could not doubt of, expected to have had the Tythes restored to them; as some Bishops petitioned that their Lands might be, which Popes had deprived them of to strengthen their Interest with the Regulars. And the Descendants of several Families whose Ancestors, contrary to a Statute of *Henry the Second*, not yet repealed, had devised Lands to them, hoped to have been charitably considered; that they might no longer suffer, or not to so great a Degree as they had done by the Faults of others before they were born. But suppose (it is easier to suppose than prove) that neither the Lands of the Bishops, nor of other innocent Sufferers should have been restored; Tythes are sacred. They are the Property of

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God;

God; which being alienated, it was reasonably thought that a *Christian* Prince, who vigorously and laudably asserted and recovered his own Supremacy from papal Usurpation, would have done what was in his Power that Restitution might be made of them; *The Things which are Cæsar's should be rendered unto Cæsar, and Cæsar himself should render unto God the Things which are God's.*

The first *Christian British* King *Lucius*, whom Mr. *Selden* in his *England's Epinomis*, honourably intitles of Kings the first *Christian*, in the 180th Year of *Christ*, when he had constituted thirty one Bishops, made large Donations to their Churches for the Support of the Bishops and inferior Clergy. These Donations were of Lands; but it is generally thought that this pious King strictly ordered the Payment of Tythes. The Character of his Piety occasions this to be thought of him, tho' no Author of undoubted Veracity hath mentioned it. I only speak of it here as reasonably conjectured. But we have Records not doubted of, for they are mentioned and confirmed by many Acts of Parliament, of several Kings of *England*, who, after the *Romans*, Conquerors of the greatest Part of that Kingdom, had left it to defend *Rome* against the *Goths*, becoming sole Proprietors of the Lands of *England*, devoted all the Tythes of those Lands to God, with solemn Imprecations on

on any themselves or their Successors who should alienate them by Grants to such as, said they, can have no Right given to them by Man, and on all who should receive, advise, or aid in such Grants. This was done at the Altars of many Cathedral Churches in *England*, and was approved and attested by the Subscriptions of all the Nobles of the Realm, spiritual and temporal, who could then be assembled. And Mr. *Selden* says, this was in those Days a parliamentary Constitution. But whether the Origin of Parliaments, such as they now are, be dated from the Reign of *Edward the First*, or they be more antient, certain it is, that several Parliaments since his Reign down to that of *Henry the Eighth* confirmed what their religious Kings did, who acknowledged that they did no more than what was their Duty to do, that they had nothing to glory of in discharging their Debt of Gratitude to God, from whose Bounty and Goodness proceeded all they enjoy'd; and therefore it was fit that Part of it should be offer'd as a *Sacrifice of Thanksgiving* to him; and that as to the determinate *Quantum* of a Tenth, God in his holy Word had expressly reserved this to himself.

So that these princely Dedications of Tythes were like *Jacob's* Vow record in the 28th Chapter of *Genesis*. *If the Lord will be with me, and will keep me in the Way that I go, and will give*

me Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, so that I come again to my Father's House in Peace, then shall the Lord be my God. And of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the Tenth unto Thee. The Lord was *Jacob's* God before *Jacob* vowed this Vow, and the Tenth belonged to God before they were vowed to him. What were these Vows then but Acts of Piety acknowledging the Sovereignty of God over his Creatures, and Right to be devoutly served out of what is his own? The Solemnity of vowing these Things (which were Matter of Duty before they were vowed, was) without Doubt, also meant to make them more fearful of transgressing it; for as the Breach of a Vow is Perjury, and that with the utmost Aggravation of the Sin, being a pompous Mockery of God, they must have had the most dreadful Apprehensions of it.

Accordingly *Jacob* never violated his Vow, nor did any of his Posterity pretend to annul it. But *Jeroboam*, not of the Royal Line, but from the Condition of a Servant advanced to the Throne of *Israel*, whose wicked Policy is recorded in the twelfth Chapter of the second Book of *Kings*, to establish himself in the Kingdom, prevented the People their going to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, lest, said he, if they should go up to do Sacrifice in the House of the Lord in *Jerusalem*, their Hearts should return again unto *Rehoboam*.

Rehoboam. *Whereupon he made two Calves of Gold, and said to the People, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold thy Gods, O Israel. Thus Jeroboam made Israel to sin.* A covetous People were easily tempted to withhold the first Fruits, which were to be brought to the Priests at *Jerusalem*, and there to be offered by them in the Temple. This was Sacrilege, which they vainly thought a profitable Sin; and that seduced them to the most gross Idolatry. For both which the Prophets denounced the Judgments of God against them; and how they were executed, the melancholy Condition of that People during their Captivities plainly sheweth.

As to Sacrilege, the modern *Jews* are so sensible of their Nation being punished for this Sin, that the devout Men among them, as they have neither Temple, nor Sacrifices, nor regular Priesthood (for their Genealogies being uncertain none is able to prove his Descent from *Aaron*) instead of Tythes, set apart a tenth Proportion of their Income for the Poor every Year.

If the same be done by those among us, who by Artifices conceal, or by Force detain what is due to God and his Church, their Charity is very private. Do our Lay-Impropietors like that which is done by those zealous *Jews*? By what appears, nothing less. Had they Charity,
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and were it visible to the World, we would tell them, there is no compounding with God, no satisfying for the Transgression of one Law by obeying another: Would they perform their Duty to God, and to Man for his sake, the Son of *Sirach*, with Regard to the Subject before us, hath expressed both *Eccles.* 7th, 31st, and 32d. *Fear the Lord, and honour the Priest, and give him his Portion, as it is commanded thee. And stretch thine Hand unto the Poor, that thy Blessing may be perfected.* This indeed is not Canonical Scripture; but it is prudent Advice, as authorised by it. Charity to the Poor, however they perform it, they allow to be their Duty; and, I think, it is proved in this Discourse that Priests are intitled to a comfortable Portion by the Word of God contained in the Scripture of the Old Testament, concerning which, between them and us there is no Dispute. And that the New Testament, saith the same, is evident as the plainest Expressions can make it.

God was pleased to institute that they among the Jews who ministered about holy Things should live of the Things of the Temple, and that they who waited at the Altar should be Partakers with the Altar. Even so, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 14. *both the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.* But how can they be said to live of the Gospel, according to the Ordinance of God, as the Levites lived of the Temple, who are not suffered to enjoy the Fruits

Fruits of the Land as they enjoy'd them? The Question concerneth those who by subtle and vexatious Contrivances defraud the Clergy of great Part of their Dues, much more those who devour all. Do they imagine that a pitiful Sallary allowed to an officiating Clergyman, perhaps not equal to what they give to some domestic Servant, is a Satisfaction for the Injury done to the Church! We often hear the Word *Compensation* for the Dues of the Clergy; but never was it more scandalously applied than here. Consider the Iniquity of this in its own Nature, or in the Consequences of it, (so obvious that I need not mention them here); the Character of the unjust Judge in the Parable, *that he feared not God, nor regarded Man*, may be fitly apply'd to these griping merciless Impropriators. It is not a Tythe of the Tythe (less than which many of them allow) nor any Thing short of the whole Tythe that God hath appointed for the Clergy; therefore they and all other Lay-Impropiators, whether they have got Possession of it by Inheritance or their own rash Purchase, ought to restore it where they are not hindered by Family-Settlements; and in such Case they should during their own Lives give the whole Tythe to the Church by the Minister who performs the Service of it, whatever temporal Damages they may sustain by this generous *Christian* Action. These ought never to be pleaded in Bar of Duty, nor ought we

we to despair of Success in preaching it, tho' hitherto to little Purpose; for the Men whom we now speak of, like a fierce and cruel People described by Virgil,

*Armati Terram exercent, semperque recentes
Convellere juvat prædas, et vivere rapto.*

I have said, that our preaching on this Subject hath been to little Purpose; but that not wholly vain, we can prove by the Examples of some few who have declared that the Discourses of the Clergy have been enforced by what they truly thought a divine Impulse on their Minds; in so much that they have resign'd their Improprations on valuable Consideration; not meaning that this Gift of God to the Church was purchased from them by Money, but by a quiet Conscience, a greater Treasure than all the Wealth of this World; in a plentiful Portion of which also they had their present Reward; for that as God promised the Israelites, *Malachi iii, x.* that if they would bring the Tythes into his Store-house, he would open upon them the Windows of Heaven, and pour them out a Blessing till there should not be Room enough to receive it, He had abundantly increased their worldly Substance, and made every Thing that they did to prosper, in Return for the good Deeds which they had done
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for the House of their God and for the Offices thereof.

Some have contemptuously ridiculed the religious Behaviour of these Men, and represented it as Enthusiasm. It is the Principle of such Scoffers that Tythes are mere arbitrary Things; that however strictly they were required from the *Jews* by God himself, *Christians* are under no Obligation to pay them, farther than the Law of their Country hath specify'd and prescribed them. Yea, there are some who say it is sinful for Ministers to demand any Tythes. These are a Sect called Quakers. Their Arch-Heretick was *George Fox*, a Shoe-maker, a senseless Man, as to Religion; but he made a better Trade of it than of that he was bred to. He in the Year 1650, which his Followers call the first Year of his Apostleship started a frugal Argument, which a thriving People have been from that Time very fond of, meaning to thrive the better by it. The Argument, as he expressed it, is this: When *Christ* sent his twelve Disciples to preach the Gospel, he told them that *freely they had received the Gospel, and commanded them freely to give it*; whence it is not lawful for Ministers, who pretend to be as the Disciples were, but are more like *Baal's* Priests, to ask, nor are we obliged in Conscience to give them any Wages; but to do what we can, like *John*, to root *Baal* out of the Land. I

should not trouble an Audience much to be respected, as I think the Clergy, and hope the greater Part of the Laity here assembled are, with the Repetition of Falshood and Scurrility as this is, did not the Clergy know, and many of them feel, by the Injuries which they suffer, that as to Tythes, the Infection of Quakerism hath spread farther than the Dialect of it is approved of, and it is now more contagious than ever. It is the common Observation of good Men, that there hath not been in any Age since *Christianity* appeared in the World, so much Opposition to the Clergy as at present. Till now Injustice to them by those who reaped the Fruits of the Land was committed privately; in our Days it is openly avowed. Associations in Defiance of the Laws of God and Man, never before heard of but among the Quakers, are formed against them, and they who are united in the Bond of Iniquity are obliged under severe Penalties to assist each other with their Fortunes. The Confederates pretend to act by Principle of Conscience. Ministers have no Right to live on the Substance of the industrious Husbandman, who wrongeth himself and his Family, if he do not by Force or Art prevent it.

It is astonishing to hear Men who talk rationally on other Subjects endeavour to support such Wickedness by the Authority of the holy

holy Word of God. But so it is, and I affirm that I have often heard this Argument (if so it must be call'd) which the first of the Quakers (by what appears never Man before him) thought of, and the rest triumph in, urged even by some who profess to be of our own Communion. But whatever they profess, we discover the Venom of the Serpent, and it is easy to trace him thro' his Windings and Turnings.

Our Blessed Saviour his first Mission of his twelve Disciples was not to preach the Gospel, but to prepare Men for the Reception of it, and to warn them *that the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, the State of the Gospel, was at Hand*; it would soon be preached to the World. To gain them Credit in what they said, he gave them *Power to cast out Devils, to cure Diseases, and to raise the Dead, by calling on the Name of the Lord Jesus*. Which miraculous Power, as they had *freely received it* from him, he commanded them *freely to exercise* for the Benefit of others. That the Words *freely give*, are thus to be understood is evident from the Connection of them with that miraculous Power they were endued with. How ineptly these Men argue appeareth farther thus: When our blessed Saviour sent his seventy Disciples really to preach the Gospel, the Reason why he forbade them to make *any Provision for their Journey* was, because

the Labourer is worthy of his Hire. Were they not then to be supported by this ? for we do not find that they had with other miraculous Powers, that of converting Stones into Bread. If then these were worthy of their Hire, as Labourers in the Vineyard of God, so were the Disciples who were sent before them, and so are we who succeed them ; not therefore as Hirelings of the State, because the State protecteth us, which we gratefully acknowledge, but as the Servants of *Christ*, who hath appointed our Wages, as he hath assigned us our Work. In this Respect we own, and we glory that we are Hirelings : And if we be such, are not they unjust who rob us of our Hire ?

But some, who infamously pretend to be wiser than God, would have us depend on voluntary charitable Contributions. Of whom ? Would any who are not of us maintain us ? Would they of our own Communion do it ? Some of them, I doubt not, would contribute bountifully towards it. But why such a Charge on them, to lessen a Weight (as they who are no Friends to the Clergy call their Maintenance) which is very supportable distributed universally ? And to what Purpose ? when we have just Cause to think that the Number of such zealous *Christians* is so small, that the utmost they could do would not supply the Clergy with the bare Necessaries of Life. God protect us from that
miserable

miserable Refuge of the Indigent, a Dependance on Charity ; for when Piety is absent, and Justice fails, Charity will not relieve.

I have with too great a Length of Time, but very imperfectly for the Subject, in both which I have abused your Patience, gone thro' the several Particulars proposed.

And now, My Lord, Right Reverend, and Most Excellent Bishop, Eminent among the Worthies of our *Israel*, whom the good Providence of God hath dignified with your high Station in the Church, and whom the same good and benign Providence hath placed over us ; You, My Lord, who by the Wisdom of your Instructions edify, and by the Sanctity of your Life are an Example to your Clergy : Ye Venerable Sirs, who are living Rules to your Flocks, and fail not to *declare to them the whole Counsel of God* revealed in his sacred Word, Learned and Faithful Stewards of the *Mysteries of God*, ye know your Duties, and *happy are ye, for ye do them*. I have not therefore presumed to appear here as a Teacher, nor is it necessary for me to persuade you to that which you skillfully and conscientiously practise. This Discourse, so far as it personally concerned the Clergy, was only to *stir up your pure Minds by Way of Remembrance, of the Ministry, which ye have received of the Lord Jesus*.

Beloved

Beloved Brethren of the Laity, I exhort you in the Name of *Christ*, our common Master, Lord of us all, that by your hearty Endeavours concurring with the Grace of God, which ye ought earnestly to pray for, ye render our Ministry successful to your and our everlasting Comfort.

I beseech God for you all, that he may make you fruitful in every good Work. And I beg your Prayers for me, lest that when I have preached to others, I my self should be a Cast-away.



F I N I S.

